

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

MCT-01 EB-07 /066 W

----- 091725

R 131230Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8334

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMCONSUL LAHORE

CINCPAC HAWAII

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EO 11652: NA

TAGS: PFOR, EAIR, IN, PK

SUBJ: POSITIVE INDIAN REACTION TO PAK HANDLING OF HIJACKING

REF: LAHORE 1162

1. THE INITIAL INDIAN REACTION TO THE PAKISTANI HANDLING OF THE HIJACKED INDIAN AIRLINER IS FAVORABLE. FOREIGN SECRETARY MEHTA'S EXPRESSION OF THANKS TO THE PAKISTAN AMBASSADOR WAS WIDELY REPORTED. COMMENTING IN A SEPTEMBER 13 EDITORIAL, THE TIMES OF INDIA SAID IF THE MOTIVES OF THE HIJACKERS WERE TO DISRUPT THE STEADY PROCESS OF IMPROVEMENT IN INDO-PAKISTAN RELATIONS, THEY HAVE FAILED. "FOR ISLAMABAD'S ATTITUDE IN THE WHOLE AFFAIR HAS BEEN QUITE EXEMPLARY...THE PAKISTAN GOVERNMENT HAS DONE ITS DUTY AS A RESPONSIBLE MEMBER OF THE WORLD COMMUNITY...IT HAS ALSO DEMONSTRATED ITS DESIRE TO LIVE IN PEACE AND AMITY WITH THIS COUNTRY." EVEN THE CPI DAILY PATRIOT FOUND GOOD THINGS TO SAY: "...ALL INDIAN AND FOREIGN PASSENGERS BEAR WITNESS TO THE COURTESIES EXTENDED TO THEM BY PAKISTAN'S GOVERNMENT AND OUR AMBASSADOR AND OTHERS HAVE NO FAULT TO FIND WITH THE EXPEDITION WITH WHICH THE INCONVENIENCED

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PASSENGERS WERE ALLOWED TO RETURN AND FACILITIES EXTENDED

TO INDIAN ENGINEERS AND OTHERS WHO WENT TO INSPECT THE
HIJACKED AIRCRAFT AND BRING IT BACK."

2. ANALYST G.K. REDDY HAD A SIMILAR COMMENT: "AS A
PIECE OF SCENARIO FOR RESTORING SOME DEGREE OF MUTUAL
TRUST IN INDO-PAK RELATIONS, THE LATEST HIJACKING HAS
ENDED ON A REASSURING NOTE WITH INDIA THANKING PAKISTAN
FOR ITS TACTFUL HANDLING OF THE SITUATION. REDDY DOES
CONTINUE, HOWEVER, AND SPECULATES ON THE FATE OF THE
HIJACKERS. HE ARGUES THEIR ARREST AT LAHORE DOES NOT
ENTITLE PAKISTAN TO EXERCISE ITS EXCLUSIVE JURISDICTION
AND CONCLUDES THAT INDIA IS ENTITLED TO ASK FOR EXTRADITION.

3. TO DATE WE CONCLUDE THAT INDO-PAK RELATIONS ARE
ACTUALLY IMPROVED BY THE HIJACKING, BUT THE FATE AND MOTIVES
OF THE HIJACKERS, AS THESE ARE REVEALED, WILL INFLUENCE
THE PRESENT ERA OF GOOD FEELING. WE SHALL PROBE DURING
THE WEEK FOR A MORE AUTHORITATIVE INDIAN POSITION ON THE
PAKISTANI HANDLING OF THE PERPETRATORS.
SAXBE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, AIRCRAFT HIJACKING, FOREIGN RELATIONS, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 SEP 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: greeneet
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976NEWDE13496
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760345-0785
From: NEW DELHI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760967/aaaacfcmltel
Line Count: 81
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 LAHORE 1162
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: greeneet
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09 JUN 2004 by buchant0>; APPROVED <15 OCT 2004 by greeneet>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: POSITIVE INDIAN REACTION TO PAK HANDLING OF HIJACKING
TAGS: PFOR, EAIR, IN, PK, INDIAN AIRLINES
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006